



The Fortnightly!

- Friday 29th November 2024 -

'Learning together in faith and love,



Statement to live by: Simple things can make us happy.

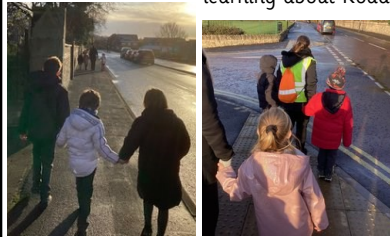
Upcoming Parental Consultations... We will be holding Parent Consultations during the week beginning 9th December. You will already have had an Arbor message detailing the dates and how to sign-up for these consultations. The meetings will be held in classrooms allowing you to see your child's wonderful learning environment and their English, Maths, Science and RE books will be available to view either before or after your appointment. If you have any questions about the sign-up process, please speak to the Main Office.
We're looking forward to seeing you there!

SEND Autumn Review Meetings... Thank you to families who have been able to attend the SEND Autumn Review Meetings. It was wonderful being able to discuss all of the progress made this academic year and to set targets for the Spring term.

Thank you for all of the positive feedback, it is wonderful being able to work alongside our families for the good of your children. **Working together!**



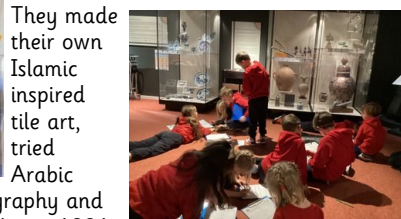
Year 2 Road Safety... Year 2 are continuing their extra curricular learning about Road Safety. Each Tuesday they are visited by Sunderland City Council and go around the neighbourhood learning about staying safe near roads and how to cross them safely.



Important life skills!

Reception September 2025... Do you, your family or friends have a child ready to start Reception in September 2025? Why not join our wonderful, happy school and become a part of the St Michael's family! You can apply **from 31st September 2024 until 15th January 2025** through the Sunderland Council Portal ([click here](#)). If you require any more details, advice or support, please contact the school office who will be happy to help.
Thank you!

Curriculum Enrichment... Last week, Year 3 found out so much on their visit to Durham Oriental Museum. They investigated early Islamic civilisation. They made their own Islamic inspired tile art, tried Arabic calligraphy and acted out '1001 nights' as well as handling artefacts. It was a great day full of learning and fun!



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Learning outside of the classroom!

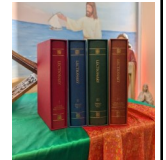


Reception Celebration of the Word... Thank you Reception for your amazing Celebration of the Word and thank you to friends and families for joining us. It was a beautiful, prayerful, respectful and reflective occasion.



Well done Reception!

New school Lectionaries... As families will no doubt already know, from Advent this year, the Church will be introducing new Lectionaries. As we are very fortunate enough to have classes across school leading Parish Masses regularly, we wanted to have our own set for children and staff to use. Very kindly, Fr. Marc purchased these for our school so, over the year, we will be fundraising to try to cover some of the cost. This has already started with 'Bingo with the Parishioners' (see below).
Listening to the Word of God!



Parish links with Year 2 Bingo... At St. Michael's, we continue to look at ways to strengthen links with our Parish community. Last week, Year 2 hosted 'Bingo with the Parishioners'. It was wonderful seeing so many people there and lots of fun was had by all. We also managed to raise in excess of £50 which will go towards the purchase cost of our new Lectionaries (see above)

Thank you for all of your support!



Home - School links...

Email:	Address:	Telephone:	Website:	Twitter:
smi@smi.bwcet.com	Durham Rd, Houghton le Spring, DH5 8NF	0191584 0542	stmichaelscatholicsschool.co.uk	@St_MichaelsRC

Headteacher: Mr. N.W. Reeson

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

SNAP STREAK
97
DAYS

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

PREDATORS AND SCAMS

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them and will post them unless they're paid. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – on this app or others. This likely isn't helped by SnapMaps – a feature which highlights your exact position in real-time. This is meant to help friends keep track of each other, but could be used for more sinister reasons.

MY EYES ONLY

Snapchat has a hidden photo vault called 'My Eyes Only'. Teens can conceal sensitive photos and videos from parents and carers in this folder, which is protected by a PIN. You can check for this by clicking on the icon which looks like two playing cards. This takes you to the 'Memories' folder which stores photos, stories and the My Eyes Only folder.

SCREEN TIME ADDICTION

Snapchat prioritises user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight', which show tailored content to each user. However, this could also be seen as an attempt to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore, constant notifications can lure people into using the app.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy in younger users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UTILISE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Snapchat's 'Family Centre' lets you view the details of the child's account – their friends list and who they've spoken to in the last week – and report any concerns. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. To keep the child's location hidden on the app, go into settings and turn on 'Ghost Mode' and 'Hide Live Location', and ensure they know not to share their location with anyone.

BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger *does* connect with a child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user – such as annoying or malicious messages, spam or masquerading as someone else.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Before you allow a child to download Snapchat, download it yourself and familiarise yourself with the app. Snapchat has produced a parents' guide to the app to help you understand how it works and any protections they have in place. A link for this can be found in the sources below.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. For example, discuss My AI's responses to questions and how reliable they are. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

Fortnightly attendance... Here are our class attendance figures for the last two weeks...

Class...	Attendance figure...	Class...	Attendance figure...
Reception	92%	Year 3	97%
Year 1	95%	Year 4	97%
Year 2	93%	Year 5	96%
	Year 6		95%

Well done to Years 3 & 4!

Child-led Class Mass... Thank you to friends and families for attending our Year 1 & 2 Class Mass last Friday. Our children always do an amazing job at leading the readings, singing beautifully and helping with the Offertory Procession. **Thank you!**

Year 5 Dodgeball Competition...

Last week, Year 5 took part in a Dodgeball Competition. They were split into 4 teams and 2 teams have made it through to the final! Well done to all children for taking part and representing our school so well.

Sporting success!



Youth Funday 2024... Last Friday, across the world, Catholic Young People came together to celebrate 'Youth Funday' as it was the Feast of Christ the King (Youth Sunday) on Sunday 24th November.

As part of this celebration, the Catholic Youth Ministry Federation (CYMFED) hosted an all day live stream on their YouTube channel which some of our classes tuned into. As well as this, children across school took part on lots of other activities to celebrate Youth Funday.

Celebrating the youth of the Church!



Follow us on X
@St_MichaelsRC

Learning together in faith and love, we shine as children of God.



St. Michael's
Catholic Primary School

**ALL FAMILIES
WELCOME**



SCHOOL ADMISSIONS OPEN FOR 2025

Why not book
a visit to see
our school?

- All Families Welcome
- Before & After School Care
- Wide Variety of Extra Curricular Activities



0191 5840542

to arrange a visit scan the QR
code to visit our website

St Michael's Catholic Primary School
Durham Road, Houghton-le-Spring, DH5 8NF
smi@smi.bwcet.com



Proud to be part of
Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust



Out of school activities...



RED SKY FOUNDATION

REINDEER DASH

£7 CHILD
Age 12 under

£8.50 ADULT
Age 13 plus

SCAN ME FOR TICKETS 

Sunday 1st December
8am-10am
Bridges Shopping Centre

- ★ Free antlers
- ★ Free reindeer sparkle food
- ★ Free ticket to see Santa
- ★ Medal

For more information and tickets visit:
dash.redskyfoundation.com

1K FAMILY FUN RUN
REINDEER DASH 2024
RED SKY RUNNING CLUB

bridges
everyone ACTIVE
Sunderland's Business Improvement District



together for
children
SUNDERLAND



Winter Holiday Camp 9-3

23rd / 30th December / 3rd January

£2.50

**BENEFIT RELATED FREE SCHOOL MEAL
(INCLUDES A HOT LUNCH)**

**£10 PER DAY IF NOT ELIGIBLE
(£12 HOT LUNCH)**

Please contact Stacey on 07397539921 /
Stacey@keepactive.org.uk for more information

Places are limited

Mind Wellbing Hub, Church Street East, Hendon,
SR1 2BB



Fixed Penalty Notices for irregular attendance at school

Important information for parents

1 OVERVIEW

Regular school attendance is vital for children to reach their full potential. If your child is absent for any reason, it is important that you communicate fully with the school. However new national guidance is to be implemented from September to manage irregular attendance at school.

Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure their child attends school regularly. They can be used in cases where absence has not been authorised by a head teacher and can be in respect of any unauthorised absence, irrespective of reason.

The notices are used to prevent the need for court action, for example, when support has not been engaged with or is not appropriate (for example, leave of absence during term time).

Changes from September 2024 are shown →

2 LEAVE

Head Teachers are unable to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation **would not** constitute an exceptional circumstance.

3 ABSENCE

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued if there are **5 days / 10 sessions** of absence in a period of **10 school weeks** (where absence has not been authorised).

A notice may be issued where the 5-day level of consecutive absence has not been reached, for example, if there are several periods of leave.

4 AMOUNT

The first penalty notice is **£160** if paid within 28 days, reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice is **£160** to be paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued.

Legal action may result (for example, prosecution).

5 FAQ'S

For further information please see Sunderland City Council website page on school attendance:

<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/>

Or DfE Working together to improve school attendance document:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>





Year 1 - 6 Christmas Pantomime... We are pleased to communicate that, on Tuesday 17th December, we have arranged for children from Year 1 to 6 to attend the pantomime. The show will be 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and will take place at Sunderland Live. We will be walking to and from the venue so children will need a warm coat and sensible footwear. Children will also need a packed lunch and water bottle. If you would like school to provide a packed lunch for your child, please let the school office know by Monday 9th December. The cost of this trip will be £7.50 per child and can be paid on Arbor via Activities - Trips - Jack & the Beanstalk Pantomime.

It's behind you!

- Important Dates -

Date	Class	Event
Thursday 7 th November – Tuesday 12 th November 2024.	Whole School.	Book Fair.
Thursday 7 th November 2024.	Year 6.	Celebration of the Word led by Year 6 at 3pm in the School Hall.
Friday 8 th November 2024.	Year 3.	Y3 Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Monday 11 th – Friday 15 th November 2024.	Whole School.	Anti-Bullying week.
Monday 11 th November 2024.	Whole School.	Remembrance Day. We will have a minute's silence in School at 11am.
Thursday 14 th November 2024.	Year 3.	Celebration of the Word led by Year 3 at 3pm in the School Hall.
Friday 15 th November 2024.	Whole School.	Children In Need. Children are invited to come to school wearing Pudsey merchandise and/or spotty clothing.
Wednesday 20 th November 2024.	Year 3.	Oriental Museum Visit.
Thursday 21 st November 2024.	Reception.	Celebration of the Word led by Reception at 3pm in the School Hall.
Friday 22 nd November 2024.	Year 1 & 2.	Y1 & Y2 Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Monday 25 th November 2024.	Year 5.	Dodgeball Festival
Tuesday 3 rd December 2024.	Year 6.	Height & Weight Check
Monday 9 th & Tuesday 10 th December 2024.	Whole School.	Parents Consultations. Appointments available to book on Arbor from Monday 25 th November 2024.
Wednesday 11 th December 2024.	Year 6.	Carol Singing at Pavillion Care Home.
Thursday 12 th December 2024.	Whole School.	Christmas Lunch / Jumper Day. Children are invited to come to school wearing their Christmas jumper instead of their school jumper.
Thursday 12 th December 2024.	Year 2.	Snow-tubing & Hot Chocolate.
Friday 13 th December 2024.	Year 1 – Year 6.	Christmas Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Monday 16 th December 2024.	Reception.	Christmas Crafts at 9am in the School Hall.
Monday 16 th December 2024.	Year 5 & 6.	Carol Service at 2pm in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Tuesday 17 th December 2024.	Reception.	Christmas Nativity at 9:30am & 1:30pm in the School Hall.
Tuesday 17 th December 2024.	Years 1-6.	Jack and the Beanstalk Pantomime @ Rainton Arena.
Wednesday 18 th December 2024.	Year 1 & 2.	Nativity at 9:30am & 2:30pm in the School Hall.
Thursday 19 th December 2024.	Year 3 & 4.	Nativity at 9:30am & 2:30pm in the School Hall.
Friday 20 th December 2024.	Rec, Year 1 & 2.	Christmas Party 1:30-3pm.
Friday 20 th December 2024.	KS2.	Christmas Party 9:30-11am.
Friday 20th December 2024.	Whole School.	School breaks up for Christmas Holidays at 3.15pm.

Autumn 2

Assemblies and Collective Worship – Parents Invited

Class	Curriculum Celebration Assemblies		Celebration of the Word	
Reception	Tues 24th June 25	9.00am	Thurs 21 st Nov 24	3.00pm
Year 1	Tues 1 st July 25	9.00am	Thurs 24 th Oct 24	3.00pm
Year 2	Tues 8 th April 25	9.00am	Thurs 23 rd Jan 25	3.00pm
Year 3	Tues 1 st April 25	9.00am	Thurs 14 th Nov 24	3.00pm
Year 4	Tues 18 th Feb 25	9.00am	Thurs 19 th June 25	3.00pm
Year 5	Tues 11 th Feb 25	9.00am	Thurs 12 th June 25	3.00pm
Year 6	Tues 28th Jan 25	9.00am	Thurs 7th Nov 24	3.00pm
Year 6 Leavers Assembly	Thursday 17 th July 2025		2.00pm	

Important Information: From time to time, due to unforeseen circumstances, the dates/events mentioned in the Fortnightly may have to be changed /cancelled. If a change/cancellation does occur, you will be notified as early as possible.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Proud to be apart of...



Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in Partnership